Our Mission: We are building a grassroots climate movement in the Bay Area & beyond that achieves deep reductions in carbon pollution and presses for socially equitable solutions and a just transition to clean energy.
Youth Vs. Apocalypse

This report describes the actions of 350 Bay Area’s youth program, Youth Vs. Apocalypse in the second half of 2018 and first half of 2019. It features key events that have drawn local, national and even international attention to the climate crisis. The report describes the strong growth of last year’s ten person youth leadership team with a single focus, into an expanded program with four distinct campaigns, a fellowship program of over 20 youth, in-school clubs at several underserved schools, a youth leadership circle, and presentations for hundreds of students each year.

YVA’s ongoing work: Climate Education and Ongoing Support for School-Based Student Climate Activist Groups

Currently, Youth Vs Apocalypse operates with multiple levels of youth engagement. YVA staff provide classroom and program presentations as the initial way of engaging youth, with a focus on youth empowerment and opportunity for collective action for climate justice. Last school year, YVA served about 600 youth through these presentations, and are positioned to present to up to 5000 students in the Bay Area if we are able to secure adequate staffing.
Staff members provide weekly support, mentorship, and opportunities for community action for **school-based clubs** at underserved middle and high schools. Last year, YVA clubs met at Urban Promise Academy, Skyline High School, Castlemont High School, Oakland SOL Middle School, and Melrose Leadership Academy. We already have requests for club support at an additional 12 schools.

YVA also offers a **fellowship program** for youth who wish to gain specific skills, connections, and analysis to respond to justice issues and the climate crisis. Last year this program served 20 youth leaders ages 11-18. These fellows have helped organize major mobilizations such as the March 15th climate strike and have earned significant media attention.

Decision-making and organizational direction happen through the YVA **Youth Lead Circle**, a group of 10 experienced youth activists who are deeply engaged with the group and its goals. The Youth Lead Circle works directly with a **circle of adult supporters** and accountability partners that includes:

- **Cory Jong**, OUSD teacher
- **Simone Delluchi**, OUSD community relations coordinator
- **Sarah Crowell**, ED of Destiny Arts
- **Pennie Opal Plant**, activist with Idle No More & other groups
- **Armando Davila**, climate justice activist
- **Kristy Drutman**, founder of Brown Girl Green
- **Mara Tobis**, parent of YVA member Isha Clarke

“**Hello, my name is Ra’mauri, and I’m eleven years old. I’m from Oakland. Climate change affects me and my home in many ways. For instance, we just got rid of the smoke from the last fire, and it was hard to breathe after the fire. Also the smoke and smog from fossil fuels are damaging our atmosphere. This is why I think you should support a Green New Deal. Because if we don’t take care of our planet, we just might lose it!**”

— Ra’mauri, 11, speech for the Green New Deal
Youth Vs. Apocalypse

Campaigns

No Coal for Oakland

Our youth coordinator works with a coalition in Oakland to help develop powerful youth campaigns. The coalition of youth leadership groups included 67 Suenos, New Voices Rising, Jewish Youth for Climate Action, and Warriors for Justice. Together we planned actions in monthly meetings in a campaign to protect the community from coal coming by rail to the Port of Oakland, bringing with it harmful coal dust.

Truth to Power - Listen to the Youth

YVA trains and supports youth in speaking at Air District hearings and other government bodies that regulate air quality. We recently hosted our first youth teach-in on air quality in Richmond.

Green New Deal

YVA youth are pushing for a Green New Deal locally and nationally. We work with the Sunrise Movement, Earth Guardians, Climate Strike US, local schools and other groups. We work to support environmental justice and investments in clean-energy jobs and infrastructure, to transform not just the energy sector, but the entire economy so we can achieve a safe climate.

Tell the CalSTRS Board to divest from fossil fuels.

The California State Teachers Retirement System Board is still invested in these climate destroying fuels. We are partnering with Fossil Free California to advocate divestment.

See more details on campaigns on our youth run website YouthVsApocalypse.org
Youth Vs. Apocalypse
Selected Events - July to December 2018

July 21 - This is Zero Hour
Youth Vs Apocalypse pulled together and coordinated a coalition of youth activists to plan and carry out the Bay Area “sister action” as part of This Is Zero Hour, a high school student led day of action for climate justice July In San Francisco.

September 8 - RISE March for Climate, Jobs and Justice
Youth vs Apocalypse coordinated six different groups of youth to attend trainings and receive materials to plan and create street murals on climate justice for the RISE action on September 8th in San Francisco.
October 29 - Youth vs. Gov Support Action

Youth Vs Apocalypse provided media training and networking support for a local action led by high school youth in support of the “Trial of the Century,” in which youth from around the country have sued the federal government for not protecting their future well being. This action was entirely student-led, YVA provided support where the students needed it.

December 13 - Sit-In at Rep. Pelosi’s office for a Green New Deal

Youth Vs Apocalypse middle school members joined with Sunrise Movement members and other adult allies who showed up at Nancy Pelosi’s office in San Francisco to demand a Green New Deal. Students participated in an art-build to prepare for the action and were able to speak on the mic in front of a large crowd to offer their perspectives on the need for a Green New Deal.
Youth Vs. Apocalypse
Selected Events - January to June 2019

February 7 - Lobbying staff of Nancy Pelosi to support a Green New Deal
YVA members worked with the Sunrise Movement Bay Area and 350 SF to meet with staff of Leader Pelosi to urge her to support the Green New Deal.

February 22 - Lobbying Senator Feinstein for her to support the Green New Deal
YVA members were invited in to meet with the Senator. The video of the encounter as they challenged Senator Feinstein to take serious climate action has been seen over 11 million times, significantly elevating the nationwide conversation about this crucial climate and social justice policy proposal, as well as prompting the senator to withdraw her watered down proposal. The YVA team went into high gear to take advantage of the moment to push the movement for climate justice forward, meeting daily and working on Op-Eds, press events, interviews, and other media appearances locally and nationally.
February 25 - Press Conference outside Senator Feinstein’s office

YVA members reinforced their demand for the Senator to support the Green New Deal. This was a chance for students to make their own voices heard and take control of the narrative around their encounter with Feinstein.

March 15 - YVA organized and led the San Francisco Student Climate Strike March

YVA members marched down Market Street from Nancy Pelosi’s to Dianne Feinstein’s office, drawing 2000 Bay Area youth participants. They followed this with a rally at Union Square in which YVA leaders were the MCs and principal speakers.
April 26 - Oakland Unified Middle School Ethnic Studies conference

Students from two middle schools, UPA and SOL, collaborated to present a workshop on climate justice and the Green New Deal.

May 3 - Fridays For the Future Fruitvale Block Party

Over 250 people attended this community-based action, focused on educating and mobilizing the East Oakland community for climate justice. Activities included games created by middle school students to illustrate climate issues (such as “Knock the Coal Out of Oakland” and “Pin the Green on The Community”); a stepping and Baile Folklorico performance, student MCs and speeches, free food provided by community vendors, tabling from local groups, with activities like seed planting and disaster preparedness, student created art work on a Green New Deal and a giant street mural for climate justice, and ... a bouncy house! This event was enormously successful in providing a local, accessible venue for many local middle school students to work on self organizing, public speaking and to become more engaged as activists.
May 8 - Speak Out at CalSTRS meeting

YVA partnered with an Oakland teacher to bring 8 middle school students to testify at the board meeting of the state teachers pension fund. The board, alarmed at the power of youth testimony, spontaneously decided to turn off the livestream during the testimony of anyone under 18 or any adult speaking who was WITH anyone under 18. Still, the students gave powerful testimony and brought new life to this divestment campaign. Our youth coordinator worked intensively with 350.org to create a video about the action that got thousands of views online.

May 16 - Youth program exchange

Middle school students working with Warriors for Justice, a school-based club in the YVA coalition, set up an exchange with a West Oakland arts group, Attitudinal Healing Connection, to present to them about the campaign to stop the Oakland coal terminal, and to bring them into planning for an action at the Bank of Montreal.
May 21 - YVA on Climate One Podcast

YVA youth were featured on the widely broadcast Climate One podcast.

May 24 - Oakland Youth Are Superheros at the Bank of Montreal

Middle and high school students from YVA school clubs and Attitudinal Healing Connection led a delegation to the Bank of Montreal to demand they divest from funding the Oakland Coal Terminal. Students brought giant superhero portraits, and left behind chalk messages to the bank; this action also generated media attention which is what the bank is trying to avoid.

June 1 - California Democratic Party Convention Actions

YVA collaborated with Sunrise Movement for this weekend of action, which included bird-dogging presidential candidates, speaking at caucuses and meetings, a press conference where they were joined by Governor Jay Inslee, and perhaps most powerfully of all, a step routine for climate justice. YVA’s process in preparing, as well as the action itself, were documented in depth for the NYT video program The Weekly. This action was followed by an end of the school year celebration at Yerba Buena Gardens.
Youth Vs. Apocalypse
Media Attention in 2019

YVA is the subject of a new documentary by Brave New Films, which will help inspire the youth climate movement. Members have also recently been profiled in sources which include Democracy Now, The New York Times, The Guardian, Sierra Magazine, Grist, Medium, Capital and Main, Wired Magazine, and many other local and national outlets.


YVA members have also been interviewed on TV programs including The Young Turks.

Thanks to all of our supporters for making our achievements possible this year.